



## PRINCIPALS' QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

2002-2003 School Profile

# Chrysler Elementary

## Stanislaus Union School District

<http://www.stanunion.k12.ca.us>

Thomas L. Freeman, Principal  
Presented at the January 2004  
Principals' Roundtable Webcast  
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Central California, Suburban, K-6, 546 students

**Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:** 83%

**English Learners:** 32%

**Demographics:**

American Indian/Alaska Native	0%
Asian	13%
Pacific Islander	2%
Filipino	1%
Hispanic/Latino	49%
African American	10%
White (not Hispanic)	24%



Year	API Score
2003	667
2002	634
2001	599
2000	544
1999	511

[more API info](#)

**Central Focuses of School Reform:**

- When the school began its reform work, the Joplin plan for grouping students for reading instruction was in use throughout the district. This method of grouping students is no longer practiced at the school. Where previously, students had been given only material at their instructional level, they now work in grade level materials with added support both during and after the instructional day to help low-performing students master grade level work. Keeping students in their assigned classroom enables the teachers to be much more closely involved in every aspect of their students' learning. The teachers now focus on teaching the standards for all students.
- The alignment of the curriculum with the standards was one of the principal's chief priorities. Though plans and ideas for meeting this priority went through the school's Leadership Team, the principal's intense focus on the standards was not negotiable. The school contracted with Data Works to analyze assessment data and to provide the staff with the data summaries necessary to align the curricular and instructional needs of the school to the standards. Data Works services allowed the school to break down its assessment data into a workable format for analysis. Data

analysis includes a review of the content clusters and cohort scores as well as a review of the homework materials to be sure all instruction and instructional materials, including homework materials, are aligned to the standards. The standards are used to set the course of action with teachers working with a standards checklist that includes benchmarks and targeted lessons that focus directly on the standards.

- In order to improve student engagement with the instructional process, the principal instituted a direct instruction model for lessons. This model was introduced to the site first through the adoption of the SRA Mastery/Corrective Reading Program to support the Open Court adoption and later carried over into other core areas through the introduction of the Explicit Direct Instruction Model used by Data Works. The teachers develop five-step lesson plans with objectives aligned to the standards.

### **Additional Information:**

- The first step on the road to reform was to develop staff cohesiveness and a sense of trust with the new site administration. The principal accomplished this in a variety of ways. For example, after attending Ruby Payne's workshop, "Understanding the Culture of Poverty," the principal inserviced the staff on expectations and strategies related to the school's population. Providing inservice for his staff was a vehicle for the principal to demonstrate not only that he had important knowledge to share but also that he was an instructional leader.
- Each step in the reform of Chrysler was part of a logical progression. It was important for the teachers to see that one step in the reform process was working effectively before they were ready to take the next step. It is as critical to the success of the reforms to avoid trying to make too many changes at once, as it is to have support from key staff members. The process is difficult enough without pushing teachers so hard that they are overwhelmed and ready to give up. This approach has enabled the staff to see first hand that the changes they have made are working. This step-by-step approach also gives the staff the understanding, insight, and commitment that make the changes at the school sustainable.
- The staff instituted an after-school, skills-based intervention program. Groups of students with identified weaknesses are invited to a six-week intersession that meets two or three times per week. Each intersession focuses on specific areas for remediation. Every six weeks a new group of students is selected based upon their targeted needs. The Title I teachers coordinate the program and assist the classroom teachers in determining the needs of the students to be served.
- The principal instituted a variety of changes to promote a more positive atmosphere amongst the students. The approach to discipline shifted from one based upon punitive consequences to one that reflects problem solving. Because attendance was a major issue at the school, a number of attendance incentives were instituted. These changes include tutoring and after school athletics as well as various other incentive programs and clubs. The school also worked closely with the local School Attendance Review Board to curtail the most severe attendance/truancy problems.
- Every two months, the school sponsors a Parents' Tea to discuss issues and provide information related to the school's work. Separate Hispanic Parent Teas are offered for Spanish-speaking parents. The school provides babysitting to encourage parent attendance.

### **Web Links:**

- [School Site Web Page](#)
- [School Site API Data](#)
- [School Site CBEDS Data](#)